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ABSTRACT

Numerous societal changes have encouraged the marked increase in second careers for people in general and for those over 35 in particular, raising implications for both career development and vocational decision-making. A developmental model needs to be realigned with new developmental strategies for the middle years. Research literature has suggested that most people undergo a midlife crisis--a reaction to the onset of aging and a reawakening to unresolved problems and/or career decisions. Recent research studies have shown higher achievement values and motivations for candidates for second careers than noncandidates and a high proportion of second-career candidates having a low degree of autonomy on their jobs. Moreover, vocational decision-making at midlife has been found more complex, "soul-rending", and fearsome than at other stages. The role of this Commission needs to be threefold: educational, collaborative, and creative. Recommended collaboration includes the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, the Adult Education Association, the National Institute of Education, and the military. Recommendations for creativity include: radio and television materials; career education-placement agencies in cooperation with labor and industry; research pertaining to counseling/assessment skills, models, and/or autobiographies of people changing careers; publications and regional meetings; training of personnel; focus on problems of women. (EA)

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NEW CAREERS FOR MID-LIFE

MAY WE HELP YOU?

Prepared for the Board of Director's
of the National Vocational Guidance
Association

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CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Redeveloping the Developmentalists	3
The Mid Career Crisis through Literature	8
A Charge to a New Commission	22

Introduction

Career hopping, once considered a symptom of instability, is now increasingly a norm for workers. Maintenance and the traditional irreversibility associated with careers has succumbed to the super-industrial future. Whereas in the pre-industrial era vocational freedom was often quiet, hidden away, and brought to nonactivity because of the lack of possibilities, the new era encompasses a multitude of choice. The changes in job requirements, the early completion of families, the ability to work and study at the same time, and, perhaps most important, the desire of men and women to lead more satisfying lives, have encouraged both the "recycling" of life styles and careers. Additional incentive for career change has come from the nationwide trend to early retirement, the liberalization of pension plans, and the rise in social security benefits. Commenting on the struggle against psychological or institutional closure, Kenneth Keniston (1969) says: "...(the new modes of thought) extol...the virtue of openness, motion and continuing of human development...there is emerging a concept of a lifetime of personal change, of an adulthood of continued self-transformation." The right of middle aged men and women to change their minds about what they want out of life has emerged as a new and legitimate demand.

Wrenn (1973) and Borrow (1973) have documented the sociological and environmental reasons for the marked increase in second careers for people in general and for those over thirty-five in particular. Accomodations are already underway in the field of

career planning. Ivey and Morrill (1968) see clients "not as individuals hunting for a place in a stable society but as changing organisms engaging in a series of career related developmental tasks that enable them to adapt themselves to a changing society." Psychologists no longer think that people in mid life with new vocational aspirations are returning to an earlier stage of development (regression) or striving for one they never reached (immaturity). Ginzberg (1972) has recently revised his theoretical assumption:

> ...in contrast to my earlier view that was the process of occupational choice as coming to a permanent closure when an individual begins to work in his early or middle 20's. I now believe that the choice process is co-extensive with a person's working life; he may reopen the issue at anytime.

Ginzberg's reformulation states that (1) While the successive decisions that a young person makes during the preparatory period will have a shaping influence on his later career, so will the continuing changes that he undergoes in work and life. (2) People make decisions about jobs and careers with an aim of optimizing their satisfactions by finding the best possible fit between their priority needs and desires and the opportunities and constraints that they confront in the world of work. The reformulated theory of Ginzberg posits that occupational choice is a life-long process of decision-making in which the individual seeks to find the optimal fit between his career preparation and the goals and the realities of the world of work.

In light of present trends, I would like to look briefly at developmental psychology, review the literature on career change, and finally suggest some possible directions your commission might take.

Redeveloping the Developmentalists

Many theorists have conceptualized personality development in terms of a series of life stages, even though they have differed on the number of stages involved and the basis for defining them. Murphy (1947) posits three states (global, differentiated, and integrated), while Sullivan (1947) delineated seven (infancy, childhood, juvenile era, preadolescence, early adolescence, late adolescence, and maturity). Freud (1933) defined the stages in his theory on the basis of the body zone to which the most libidinal energy was cathected (oral, anal, and genital), while Buehler(1933) defined the stages in her theory primarily on the basis of the socio-economic expectations of the individual (growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline). Erikson (1963), using both physiological and societal considerations, posited eight stages (oral-sensory, muscular-anal, locomotor-genital, latency, puberty and adolescence, young adulthood, adulthood, and maturity). Murphy and Buehler, being more concerned with adult behavior, give less detailed analysis to the pre-adolescent period than do Freud and Sullivan.

Beilin (1955) has pointed out the relevance of developmental psychology to vocational development theory building. Consistent with this, several vocational development theorists have used the life-stage concept. Super, Crites, Hummel, Moser, Overstreet and Warnath (1957) define five stages of vocational development, growth (conception to age 14), exploration (15-24), establishment (25-44), maintenance (45-64), and decline (65 and above). Havighurst (1964)

posits six stages: identification with a worker (ages 5 to 10), acquiring the basic habits of industry (10-14), acquiring identity as a worker in the occupational structure (15-25), becoming a productive person (25-40), maintaining a productive society (40-70), and contemplating a productive and responsible life (70 and above). The above theorists devote their most detailed attention to the period between the ages of 10 and 25, the period of "occupational choice." However, Super and Havighurst are concerned with vocational development as a life-long process, and define three life stages beyond the age of 25. Miller and Form (1951), working in the field of industrial sociology, also posit a series of career development stages.

While the developmental theories are helpful they do not go far enough. Vocational choice has been relegated to the earlier years and mid-life is all but forgotten once a choice is made. Can we still assume that once people leave one of the various levels of education (secondary, junior college, undergraduate, or graduate) they leave with a vocation for life? I do not think so. The nature and pace of our changing society has implications for both career development and vocational decision-making. But rapid change as it affects the individual and the occupational world is not adequately dealt with in most vocational theories.

> Much of our theorizing about social and psychological change presents a valid picture of man in relatively static societies--but a distorted and incomplete picture of the truly contemporary man. It misses a critical difference between the men of the past or present and the men of the future. This difference is summed up in the word "transience." (Hoffman and Rollin, 1972)

Life style is another major component in vocational development. According to Toffler (1970) it is subcults that determine life style. Moreover, the multiplicity of subcults in society has brought an explosive multiplicity of life styles. This is further complicated by the rather free movement between subcults, of which the drop-out and drop-back-in syndrome is an example.

Bombarded by information, lured by multiple subcults and transient relationships, more people adopt and discard life styles. Life style itself is a throw-away item. If people are shopping around for life styles, how much investment of self are they willing to make in their temporary "selves"? (Hoffman and Rollin, 1972).

Occupational choices, for most theorists, require a stable awareness of both self and reality. But Toffler's thinking about life style and self-concept confronts us with problems of individual integration. Stability of self-concept is threatened by constant reality testing and by coping strategies calling for multiple identification and less investment of self in the throw-away life style. The bases of choice become indistinct.

Making decisions is likewise affected. Programmed decisions are routine, easy decisions such as how to get to work, where to have lunch, etc. Not much information is processed and decisions are of "low psychic cost". Nonprogrammed decisions are high in "psychic cost", require more information processing and result in decision stress. What do I want as an occupation? What am I as a person suited to? What skills do I have? Acceleration of the life pace forces us to make these harder decisions faster than we can process the new information required. This results in cognitive overload, e.g., ever increasing amounts of occupational information

that need to be processed in order to make vocational choices. Toffler's message is clear: transience, discontinuity and novelty are affecting the decision process now and will increasingly continue to do so.

A current issue in our culture is the quality of life. In order to deal with the vocational aspects of this phenomenon we need to know what the processes are that facilitate the development of those in mid-life. How can we free people from the limitations that interfere with or impede the developmental/choice process? We might begin by opting for some new developmental strategies through the rearrangement of our theoretical base and a new self-in-time continuum. McClusky (1970) and Hershenson (1968) have made efforts in this direction. McClusky (1970) compares developmental stages and finds them deficient. He notes that the majority of theorists are similar in suggesting an intial stage of increase (Progressive Growth, Expansion, and Preparatory), a middle stage of consolidation (Stability of Growth, Maintenance, and Culmination) and a final stage of decline (Regressive Growth, Defense Against Loss, and Decline). But McClusky believes the later years are in fact a period of <u>progressive growth</u>, and that there is potential for the prolongation of adult development not acknowledged by the conventional view of change in the adult years. In speaking of adult learning he states it is the "adult's failure to <u>internalize the learner role</u> as a central feature of the self that is the substantial restraint in the adult's realization of his learning potential." The same is true of his career. It is the failure of being aware of his changing self and the moribound condition that he (the adult) often allows to encircle him and not a decline in absolute capability

or possibility that causes frustration with his career. The present conceptualization of growth followed by maintenance and decline with its built-in obsolescence may need to be overhauled.

Hershenson (1968) has posited a sequential model of vocational development. The sequential nature of the stages, rather than the chronological age at which they most typically occur, is central. Vocational development is sequential, rather than age related. Each stage sets the limiting conditions for the subsequent ones. Besides removing the age-defined benchmarks and making allowance for the recurrance of vocational developmental tasks, Hershenson's system serves to organize existing vocational development theories within a unified framework. In an earlier article, Hershenson (1966) offers suggestions for both remediation and development.

Finally, what about work itself? There is evidence of "temporariness", e.g. problem oriented task forces--experts gather to solve a problem, complete a project, and move on. What of the "alienated" workers afflicted with the blue-collar blues, the white collar woes, and the just plain on-the-job blahs? Is the coming consultant model one of working to change organizational patterns and is it appropriate to limit ourselves to helping people find new careers suitable to their interests and aptitudes, i.e., working within existing limitations as we have been? What good does it do to know that choosing a new career involves implementing a self concept if there are no jobs available that allows one to be the kind of person he wants to be? Is it time for vocational counselors to attempt to mold society to the requirements of the individual? Some feel it is our responsibility to help create new jobs because changing technology and increased longevity have created the need

to radically overhaul our traditional work patterns (Bickford, 1972). A recent HEW report indicated that nearly half of American workers are dissatisfied with their jobs and suggested something had better be done to make work more attractive, interesting and meaningful. According to the 200-page HEW study, the work force in America is changing and more and more workers are growing restless because of "dull, repetitive, seemingly meaningless tasks, offering little challenge or autonomy." Chances are more people will be opting for change.

In sum we need to realign our developmental model, with new developmental strategies for the middle years. We also need to consider the pathologies of work. McClusky and Hershenson give us some direction, and others on the front lines are suggesting a new approach to dealing with the world of work and jobs per se. All of the above is obviously related to the work of this commission.

The Mid Career Crisis Through Literature

There are massive amounts of research on the elderly and the young, but nothing systematic on the middle point. Most of what is available is written in the popular vein and based upon stereotypes and assumptions without substantial empirical data. For the sake of convenience we might divide the literature in this area into two categories: (1) The rationale given as to why people in their mid-thirties suddenly crack up, break down, let their careers go smash, or lash out at those closest to them. (2) A second category to focus on the individual who undergoes career change and to find out how he can help us.

According to Jaffee (1971):

--In 1970, 40.4 million, or just under 25% of the U.S. population, were in the age group 35 to 54;

--By the year 2000 there will be 78 million U.S. citizens in that age group;

--Currently the age group comprises 40% of the labor force.

Rogers (1973) suggests that at some point between the ages of 30 and 39 most people undergo a crisis in the course of which profound changes occur in the individual's relations to himself or herself and to his or her external environment.

> Among those who reflect upon the human condition in our western society, it is increasingly recognized that the decade from 35 to 45 is a time of crucial importance for the development of the individual. It is a period when new possibilities emerge and new patterns of living are explored. It is also a time when emotional disturbances of many varieties are likely to be made manifest.

The most creative years are usually between the ages of 30 and 39. There are those who see the years around forty as "a second adolescence; a springboard for new departure and new interests rather than a plateau." (Lehman, 1953).

Hiestand (1971), as part of the Conservation of Human Resources Project at Columbia University, studied a group of 70 older students whose graduate or professional study (in sixteen different disciplines) reflected a change in career. He concludes that a major factor in their decision to change careers was that "middle-aged people increasingly have options which were not formerly available to them as individuals when they were young." Heistand presents evidence of the impact of children's developing knowledge upon the parent, fear of obsolescence, and a decided search for purpose in life and family problems. He was careful to point out that "those

with great difficulties are unlikely to respond to a questionnaire such as ours, and those who do respond tend to minimize their difficulties."

Ginzberg (1972) feels that the Hiestand study contributes to a deeper understanding on matters of timing. Many people who had decided on a career early in life and who had pursued it for a number of years with marked success might, as a result of changes within themselves or within their work environment, seek a new career that holds forth the promise of greater satisfactions.

Hence, Ginzberg feels that if asked to identify the principal factors that lead to a lifelong dynamizing of the choice process, he would be inclined to stress the following: the first and foremost is the feedback mechanism that exists between a man's original career choice and his work experience. If the satisfactions that he sought originally are not forthcoming, or if as a result of his working he becomes aware of new career possibilities that promise greater satisfactions, it is likely he will endeavor to make a new choice. The probability of his venturing and succeeding in carrying it out will be affected by two related factors: (a) the degrees of freedom that he has as a result of changing family circumstances, i.e., if his children are grown and his savings allow him to take a year off to explore a new field; and (b) the pressures or options arising out of his job situation that force him to look for new employment or which enable him to accept early retirement. The passage of the years implies that the individual is undergoing important changes: He is accumulating skill and work experience;

his interests and values are likely to shift; his personal and family circumstances will not remain the same. Men and women seek to find the best occupational fit between their changing desires and changing circumstances.

In studies of physiological changes Blebin (1967) reports:

> In fact, by middle age the non-physical aspects of aging loom up, perhaps, as the more important. The extent to which adults are able to maintain their flexibility of mind, to adjust themselves to a changing world and to the new demands in the work situation have more bearing on the problems of everyday life than losses in the sensitivity of the sense organs or muscle power.

Other researchers have touched on various aspects of the mid-life crisis. Jung (1933) placed "middle life" between the ages of 35 and 40 and referred to statistical evidence showing a "rise in the frequency of cases of mental depression in men about 40, (while) in women the neurotic difficulties generally begin somewhat earlier--between 35 and 40." Kinsey (1953) reported that "the peak of extramarital activities, both petting and coitus, occurs in the mid-thirties and early forties." Erikson (1963) posited eight developmental psychosocial stages, with stage seven corresponding to adulthood in middle age. He saw this stage characterized by one of two opposing developmental manifestations. One, "stagnation," he described as a "regression to an obsessive need for pseudo intimacy, often with a pervading sense of personal impoverishment ...and excessive self-love." The other, "generativity," he described as being "marked by a primary concern in establishing and guiding the next generation," caring for the welfare of others by trying to make their world a better place to live and work in.

Jacques (1965) published a paper called "Death and the Mid-Life Crisis" in which he suggests that this crisis is basically depressive, "calling for a reworking through of the infantile depression, but with a mature insight into death and destructive impulses to be taken into account." The crisis is a reaction which not only occurs in creative genius, but manifests itself in some form in everyone. It has to be with the passage of the midpoint in life and with an increasing awareness of death.

Stockford (1968) presented findings based on three interrelated studies involving more than 2,100 men and women. Stockford's research indicated that 80 percent of executives aged 34-42 are hit by a crisis that often results in serious personality problems. They admit to "having trouble with their wives, and frequently blow up on their jobs because of trivial events" which the author suggests stem from "the daily personal conflicts a young man undergoes when he finds his youthful ideals and goals banging up against business operations that seem to him low on principle and high on expedience."

Part of the mid-life crisis, biophysiological research suggests, is due to the onset of aging and one's emotional reaction to this process. Davidson (1939) wrote: "Aging commences between the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth decade." Cohn (1939) reported that the early signs of arteriosclerosis generally start to appear in people over 30. According to Prados and Ruddick (1947) endocrine disturbances, with attendant waning of sexual powers, may threaten men and women with the loss of their "love object,"

thus reactivating previous conflicts and anxieties. Rapoport (1970) described studies indicating that, from their thirty-fourth year on, humans normally experience a "progressive decline in psychological as well as biological powers."

Rogers (1973) cites two interacting causes of stress developing at the midpoint of a person's life: (1) The individual experiences a reawakening of unresolved problems that occurred in the early stages of his or her development. (2) At a deeper level people wish to halt or even reverse the aging process and thus the advent of death. The awareness of death on a conscious or a subconscious level, is the second cause of stress. Rogers feels that during midlife two modes of behavior can be observed--flight from or fight with one's fear of death. Flight is apt to be characterized by a feeling of helplessness, withdrawal into oneself, a feeling that "life is too tough" or that "there are no good professional openings for people after forty." Those who fight use this period as a time to strengthen their ability to face eventual death and adjust to it maturely.

Can we conclude that those who seek to change careers are quite "healthy" individuals? In spite of the fact that they are bombarded with decisions to make for which they may be poorly prepared and loaded with information they cannot effectively process they are less likely to engage in the following types of coping strategies common to those burdened with decision stress and cognitive overload:

1. Denial. Denying--blocking out unwelcomed reality.

2. Specialization. Specializing--not blocking out all novelty and information, but attempting to keep pace in a specific narrow sector.

3. Reversion. Going backward to previously successful routines, now irrelevant and inappropriate.

4. Super-simplification. Seeking a simple, neat equation to solve everything. This may explain dropping out to substitute one big problem for all the overwhelming little ones (Hoffman and Rollin, 1972).

Before examining the individual who undergoes change, it is worth noting that most people make a decision about their careers at an age when they do not have the experience and judgment to know what activity is most congenial to them. Perhaps in their mid-thirties they wake up to the fact that it is too late to start that activity which they now know would have been the right choice (Fromm, 1968).

Brown (1972) took a sample of 100 in mid-life (ages 35-54) examining their primary reasons for seeking counseling and their personality assessments as rendered by clinical psychologists. When the two ways of looking at the group were charted, 88% of the group fell in the first four personality categories (confused, anxious, depressed or dysfunctional), and 80% gave the following three reasons for seeking counseling (undifferentiated feelings regarding abilities and work, terminal date given or already unemployed, stress in present job is too great). These two sub-groups accounted for 73% of the sample. A third concern was physical health. Forty-eight percent of the sample had physical symptoms or illnesses which were significant to life planning.

It is interesting that educational level is positively related to the tendency among employed man to define work as an activity that

is required or not enjoyed. Brim (1968) points out that the greater the person's educational achievements, the higher his aspirations, but that higher aspirations are accompanied by a higher risk of nonachievement of those aspirations. A person "handles these discrepancies for a long period of time by successively displacing fulfillment of aspirations into the future, but the day of reckoning does come." The point to be made here is that persons whose occupational achievements do not equal their original aspirations come to look upon their jobs as something that must be performed but not necessarily enjoyed. Such person may constitute the group for whom second career opportunities may be the most critical.

The need for a policy of second career opportunities can be strengthened by such arguments as (a) the need for upgrading middle-level workers and professionals to "make room" for lower working-class men and women who complain about being in dead-end jobs; (b) the needs of society for more people to perform higher level functions and public service functions now in sad neglect; and (c) the need for workers today to be "loose" when it comes to over-identification with one occupation in time of high unemployment. In a study of unemployed workers done by the Upjohn Institute, it was found that workers who looked for jobs really different from what they had been doing regularly had a high job-finding success rate (Sheppard, 1971).

Sheppard (1971) interviewed approximately 300 white male workers in four selected urban areas of Pennsylvania primarily concentrating on working conditions, job satisfaction, social political attitudes

and behavior. Of the 210 respondents, 140 were 40 years of age or older. Candidates were operationally defined as candidates or non-candidates for second careers on the basis of their responses.

Three items are especially pertinent because there is little or no difference between the candidates and non-candidates for second careers. First, there is little difference between the two types insofar as hourly wages or their felt adequacy regarding take-home pay; second, the two groups are virtually identical regarding family income; third, there is no overwhelming contrast regarding education, although one might expect to find the average education level of the candidate group higher since they tend to be the younger members of the 40-plus men's sample. The critical point is that the usually considered economic variables such as income and/or adequacy of take-home pay do not appear to contribute to an identification or understanding of the second-career candidate.

It is in the social-psychological sphere where actual differences between the two groups appear. The candidates for second careers have higher achievement values and higher achievement motivations. On the behavioral level, a higher proportion of the 40-plus candidates report that they have tried to get into a different kind of work.

Other variables on which the candidates for second careers stand out are lower perceived mobility chances in their current jobs, greater preference for a job different from the one they have now if they were free to go into any type of job they wanted, and lower

job satisfaction. These all point to a group of men who would benefit from a more structured opportunity program enabling them to shift to new and different kinds of work life.

One of the most provocative findings is the high proportion of the second-career candidates who reported having a low degree of autonomy on their jobs as measured by items adapted from Turner and Lawrence's research. These men feel that they have little or no freedom to do their jobs as they want to, and can use little or none of their potential ideas and skills on their current jobs. Only a small minority (10 percent) report having an excellent chance of advancing themselves or to be promoted in their present work situations, in contrast to more than one-third of the noncandidates who are by definition either not interested in changing occupations, or not willing to take an upgrading training or education program.

Sheppard's conclusion is worth noting:

> In summary, one could argue that there is a malaise among a significant portion of white male workers in America...Much of this relates, it appears, to a growing need for flexible or second careers among such persons. The same may be said even for the technician and professional classes in our society. Nor should we exclude the growing numbers of minority group members of our labor force.

Brown (1972) has done research on the mid-life crisis and suggests the following needs:

1. A need for clarification of personal resources; characteristics, abilities, motivations, interests, experience;

2. A need for assistance in uncovering and dealing with personal and environmental factors potentially detrimental to satisfying and satisfactory functioning occupationally.

3. A need for help in planning and carrying out career development alternatives, in or out of the present occupation; and

4. A need for discovering a life gestalt which would overcome the tendency to compartmentalize life into conflicting segments.

Out of his work, Brown (1972) has generated a number of hypotheses about the middle-life experience widely supported in the literature.

1. The middle-life experience for many today is an experience of re-establishment rather than of maintenance. The processes of change in our culture, the information explosion, the changing occupational structure all contribute to a search by many for a new sense of establishment in life and work. They feel disestablished and look for certainty and confirmation, for ways to realign themselves comfortably and meaningfully within the same occupational milieu if not the same job.

2. On the other hand, the middle-life experience for others is definitely a quest for maintenance but that quest itself implies an arrival which may be resisted. Resistance to the idea of such arrival may symbolically be a resistance to the idea of death and thus would be seen as healthy rather than unhealthy, as a sign of adjustment rather than of maladjustment process. The tension produced by resistance nevertheless requires tension reducing activities--which may include a search for occupational alternatives, for job enrichment, or for ways to alter all the priorities of life. These activities are signs of health but if pursued in non-productive or

destructive ways they can lead to occupational and/or emotional turmoil which then takes precedence over the basic struggle, which is to find a way to deal with the meaning of maintenance as a way of life.

3. Vocational decision-making in mid-life is far more complex, "soul-rending" and fearsome than it is at the earlier (adolescent) or later (retirement) points in life. The realities of life are not as flexible, idealistic assumptions are not as energizing, anxiety, depression, confusion less readily rationalized as growth phenomena. There is a sense of time, of the shortness of time, which cannot be avoided; the time for another fantasy or trial period is not present for most, and there is not likely to be yet another period when another shift can be considered. Being able to say, "I can always change when I'm 30 or 40," may make decisions easier for the 18 or 20 year old; the 40 or 50 year old is able to say, "Well, it will only last 'til retirement"--but that is not a very helpful "out." There is a sense of radical importance attached to the decisions in mid-life.

4. The failure to develop an adequate and effective life planning process before middle-life arrives may seriously hamper the individual's capacity to deal with the forces of middle life. The major task of the early adult years (25 to 34), then, may be not so much establishment as the development, implementation and refinement of a process which helps keep the whole of life in perspective. Such a way of planning can be taught and can be

learned in middle-life but its lack is often not discovered until the pain of its absence is experienced.

5. The economic and social successes which are driving forces earlier are not as likely to be as fulfilling in middle-life. "I have done my thing in this (job, occupation, company, parish) and feel a need for a new pasture" is not an uncommon expression; neither are the symptoms of "success without meaning" difficult to observe in a group of economicially and socially successful people. Helping the middle-life person do more successfully something he has already done successfully enough in many instances may not touch upon the depths of his being at all.

6. The major value orientations of life are up for reshuffling in middle-life. The person who has spent a major part of life searching for power (or responsibility) may now strongly desire to search for pleasure and/or meaning; one who has concentrated on finding pleasure may feel a strong need to focus upon responsibility or meaning. Such reappraisal raises havoc with life styles, interpersonal relationships, family life, and work.

7. The work orientation adhered to by many in the earlier years begins to fail, if it is to fail, during the middle-years. It is found no longer adequate as an organizing principle of life but nothing is very easily discovered to take its place. When structure built around one compartment of life begins to fall apart, the whole fabric of life is threatened--feelings of chaos, anxiety or defeat may follow.

8. The problems of middle-life are not as likely to be physically derived as they are to be either psychically or life milieu related, but a high percentage of those who seek vocational counseling may have significant physical problems.

9. The problems of unemployment are likely to be more significant in later middle-life than in earlier middle-life. Mobility is likely to be a greater concern in the forties, unemployment in the fifties.

A Charge for a New Commission

Basically, I feel the role of the Commission to be threefold: educational, collaborative, and creative.

The educational mission includes preparation of the young and the adult population in general.

Preparation of the young cannot be devoted exclusively to the acquisition of specific skills. It is just as relevant to prepare young people psychologically for the fact that, before they leave the labor force, they will have entered a variety of somewhat different jobs. The need to consider that collectively their future working lives will differ radically from both past and present patterns; that they will change jobs and relocate more often; that they will require "up-dating" and will trade in their education for newer models, perhaps more than once, in order to stay abreast and remain employable.

A second critical point is that, with perhaps the exception of the military establishment, our other institutions that touch the lives of adults are doing little to make it possible for middle-aged and older persons to enter new occupations. Along with this lack of opportunity is a fear of obsolescence. Surely there is nothing more damaging to the human spirit than the belief that one's capacities are unused, unwanted, or expanded in something of no particular value. There is much work to be done on both fronts.

Along these lines of collaboration, I have three suggestions. First, I suggest you collaborate strongly with the American Association

of Community and Junior Colleges and the Adult Education Association of the United States. Both are in contact with large numbers of the nation's adults. One of the functions of the Community or Junior Colleges is Community Education (Community Service, Continuing and Adult Education). It seems to me this institution is a good place to put in a delivery system for those who need your efforts the most.

Secondly, I suggest you co laborate with the new National Institute of Education (NIE). They make specific mention of career education ("recycling") in their charter and I feel that this is an excellent place to get some attention for your efforts and to seek funding for small grant research if they have funds.

Third, I suggest you collaborate with the military. The Department of Defense has an established program (REFERRAL Program) to deal with the very problems we are considering. Their program has been in operation since 1970 in handling the occupational relocation of military servicemen at mid-career.

I believe the main objectives are to create some awareness, to make sure our young people are prepared early enough, to make sure our adults are given opportunities to deal with mid-career change and life planning, and to collaborate with existing resources and programs. There is strength in numbers.

Finally, under the banner of creativity I would like to offer a few recommendations or proposals and not necessarily in the order of importance.

1. I suggest the formation of a joint commission with the Adult Education Association of America and the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges to deal collectively with this

problem and to make sure that your efforts are disseminated the length and breadth of these institutions and others who are in contact with people having problems of this nature.

2. The preparation of materials for extensive use on both radio and television. The proparation of a short presentation for national television in conjunction with one of the major networks and/or industries. Today it is commercials that are informing people who you are and how you can help. You have plenty of good examples in Shell Oil, Kodak and Pepsi-Cola on how to reach people in this way. A spin-off is a 90 minute special, a portion of 60 Minutes or First Tuesday. This could be done in conjunction with National Vocational Guidance Week.

3. An offer in conjunction with industry and labor to assist in establishing career education-placement agencies either within local industries or in designated centers to serve localities. The purpose of such centers would be to assist those contemplating changes within an organization or transferring to another organization. Assessment in the past had dealt almost exclusively with the entering worker. I am suggesting assessment centers (local community college, library, etc.) where employees may re-evaluate their lifestyles and goals within an organization and may get the assistance career change demands.

4. The development of some small but needed research efforts. I have three in mind specifically. First we need to know just

exactly what kinds of information we need to collect in this area. Now that we know there is a problem what are the counseling and assessment skills for dealing with it? Second, we need to develop some models and/or autobiographies of people who have or are changing careers and use these to help dispel the myths about obsolescence and the "abnormality" or "impossibility" associated with working at three or four jobs in one's lifetime. Third, we need to create some developmental strategies to aid people in mid-career changes. Once we have these, and they prove facilitative, we can produce some new developmental tasks for these years.

Let me mention some pertinent things for research in this area. The most adequate counseling service for mid-life adults must be interdisciplinary and comprehensive in its approach. The interplay in the life of these persons of job questions, vocational concerns, psychic and physical phenomena is extremely complex. The clinical model alone is insufficient without the professional ability of the vocational counselor, and his unput without the clinical assessment may be based upon unfounded premises. Medical analysis of physical data is another significant component. Occupational data is of prime importance and integrating it with the realities of life is a major concern and should be dealt with responsibility. This is an interdisciplinary mission, the end product of which is not the exclusive concern or property of counselors or counselor educators.

5. I see the value of a number of publications. One for counselors and educators which would discuss a total on-going program

on how to help people in the middle of career confusion or change. A second publication for industry which can be passed out to workers giving them reassurance, information on where they can go or who they might call to get the help they need.

6. I see the value of a number of regional meetings to be conducted in conjunction with the commission's efforts. Public awareness is on the rise concerning the very problem we are dealing with and I can envision a large attendance at such gatherings provided you do your homework and have something worthwhile to share with the participants.

7. I see the need for your commission to start the procedures for training the personnel that are needed to deal with these problems. You need to "recycle" some of the present counselors across the country to make every effort to include and use those who have undergone career changes personally. They are a major source of untapped material.

8. I see the need to be specific about the problems of women in this regard. Women workers, who now represent almost two-fifths of all workers, are, like their male counterparts, subject to the changing demands of a dynamic economy, particularly since they tend to be concentrated in occupations (e.g. clerical) in which automation has had considerable impact in recent years. Many are leaving home after successfully raising a family. Many interrupted their educational preparation for marriage, and their career development was frequently marked by shifts between work and home. Moreover, because the employment of their husbands took precedence over their own,

many women modified their career objectives. I think there is enough work to be done in this area to allow you to offer a significant challenge to any and/or all sincere about women's liberation.

I hope that is enough to get you started. New excursions are always risky and pouring new wine into old wineskins is a delicate process. But all of us are watching intensely and eagerly awaiting your endeavors.

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